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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

For Wednesday - April 30, 1941

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "IF I ONLY HAD SOME EXTRA MONEY." Information from the Farm Security Administration. U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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How many times have you said "If I only had some extra money, I'd do so and so?" If you had a nickel for every time you'd said it, you'd probably not need any extra money, would you? But you don'tand neither do I.

Today the Farm Security Administration reports some of the ways women in its borrower families earn extra money. Maybe you would like to hear them...In the first place, farm women are extremely busy and don't have much time for earning extra money. Most of them cook, can, clean, mend, sew, wash, iron, and care for children from morning to night. Or garden or raise chickens or -

There's an answer -- Gardening and poultry-raising are two of the very best ways to earn extra money on a farm. Many a thrifty farm woman owes her new dress or new wallpaper to some Spring fryers or early ripe tomatoes. Yes....take gardening. If you haven't already planted some extra vegetables in the garden or truck patch to sell, do it now. And try to plant things that won't be too plentiful so you'll get a better price.

There are many cases of folk who planted more cabbage than they needed, or lettuce, or beans or peas or squash or pumpkins, and sold them to advantage. A Colorado woman made a \$143 return on a \$3 investment in various garden seed. Four farm boys also in Colorado sold \$100 worth of cucumbers from an irrigated patch of land. A Nebraska woman bought a dime's worth of tomato seed and sold 500 young plants to her neighbors to set out. Other women raise cabbage plants, pepper plants, and eggplants to sell.

Well, this is a good time to talk about raising extra chickens too, isn't it? Or for that matter, extra turkeys, geese, guineas, ducks. Of course, you could sell your poultry live or dressed, but many women now find their best sales from fancy-dressed poultry....Then there are eggs to sell - eggs for eating and hatching eggs. And if you have geese, maybe there are soft, downy feathers to sell.....Some farm women do well with dairy products too - surplus milk, cream, and butter. But no housewife sells anything she can use at home. Her family come first and these are just left-overs after eating and canning all she needs.

Then there are women who earn by sewing. They make the "usual" things like dresses, suits, and jackets. But at least one woman is a bit unusual - she makes only baby dresses. She makes each tiny garment with care and puts some dainty hand-work on it and sells them through a specialty shop in town.

Do you happen to know any handicraft? I mean, can you do any? If you can, you can probably 'smile' at all the hard work of people who garden and sew and raise chickens. 'That is, you can....if you do something "different"....and extremely well....and have a market for it. 'Because you will be doing something you enjoy and getting paid for it.

Near Elkton, Virginia, the Farm Security Administration has a homestead project called "Shenandoah Farms". Here in the shadow of the Blue Ridge mountains, men and women earn extra money by making attractive articles from native materials. They take ordinary acorns, sycamore, china berries, pine and spruce cones, seed and seed pods, and other natural growths and make a wide variety of useful and ornamental things. Of course, they fashion many novelties and souvenirs of nearby Shenandoah Park too, and sell them to tourists through gift shops along Skyline Drive.

Some of the actual things they make are boutonnieres, corsages, trays, splint baskets, artificial flowers, smoking sets, mountain sunbonnets, soft toys, dolls, and wooden pull toys. The character dolls are the most popular - both with

children and collectors. They include a be-spectacled grandmother doll who sits in a rocker knitting, a "little Valley girl" with short curly hair, a mountain child with pigtails down her back, and a gallant boy in overalls.

At Ashwood, South Carolina, a group of out-of-school girls have organized an interesting "shuttle Club." They do handloom weaving, and weave many articles such as breakfast and luncheon cloths, table runners, dresser scarfs, curtains, draperies, bedspreads, and cloth for suits and dresses. Sometimes they put on special exhibits to stimulate sales, but right now normal business is giving them more orders than they can fill.

Women and girls in other localities turn their spare time and talents into basketry, wood-carving, pottery, shuck work, pewter, and wrought-iron work. A Southern woman has become known for her little woolly sheepskin dogs. Another is known for her cornshuck dolls with cornsilk hair-braids. A number of women are clever at turning waste materials - such as scrap lumber and orange crates - into magazine racks, endtables, doorstops, book shelves, whatnots, toys, and novelties...

It's true that marketing articles may be a bit of a problem. Still if you make something well enough, "different" enough, and desirable enough, somebody will be sure to want it. Some farm women market their products through city stores or roadside gift shops. Others depend on personal sales to friends and acquaintances, and a few sell through cooperative marketing associations.....

Maybe you know some ways you can make leisure moments count for you. If so, maybe you'll get that extra money you wanted but just couldn't squeeze out of the regular farm income.

